

Reform and Exploration of Aesthetic Education Textbooks in Jiangsu Applied Undergraduate Universities

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ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the current development status and reform trajectory of aesthetic education textbooks in Jiangsu applied undergraduate universities, revealing their deficiencies and issues, and conducting a root cause analysis. Although universities in Jiangsu have made certain progress in the construction of aesthetic education textbooks, problems such as the disconnection between the content of textbooks and the development of the times, the gap with students' actual needs, and the imbalance in the distribution of teaching material resources still exist. By enhancing the timeliness and forward-looking nature of textbooks, improving the integration of textbooks with local culture, strengthening the practical orientation and interactivity of textbooks, establishing continuous updating and feedback mechanisms, and improving teachers' professional qualities, we can effectively promote the comprehensive development of aesthetic education in Jiangsu applied undergraduate universities.

KEYWORDS

aesthetic education; textbooks; applied undergraduate universities; Jiangsu.

1 Research Background

1.1 National Emphasis and Requirements on Aesthetic Education

In recent years, the national emphasis on aesthetic education has continued to increase. In March 2019, the Ministry of Education's "Opinions on Effectively Strengthening the Aesthetic Education Work of Colleges and Universities in the New Era" clearly stated that it is necessary to "actively explore the evaluation system of modern university aesthetic education with Chinese characteristics and further improve the task objectives of the university aesthetic education evaluation system"[1]. This policy points out the direction for the development of university aesthetic education and provides policy support for the reform of aesthetic education textbooks.

1.2 Guiding Opinions of the Ministry of Education on Aesthetic Education Textbooks

The Ministry of Education has issued several guiding opinions on the compilation and use of aesthetic education textbooks, aiming to standardize the content of aesthetic education courses and improve the quality of textbooks. For example, the "National Guidance Plan for Public Art Courses in Ordinary Colleges and Universities"[2] clarifies the goals, content, teaching methods, and evaluation system of aesthetic education courses. These documents provide specific guidance for

the compilation, revision, and implementation of university aesthetic education textbooks, promoting the standardized and scientific development of aesthetic education.

2 Current Development Status and Reform Trajectory of Aesthetic Education Textbooks in Jiangsu Applied Undergraduate Universities

2.1 Historical Evolution of Aesthetic Education Textbooks

The aesthetic education textbooks of applied undergraduate universities in Jiangsu Province have undergone a development process from scratch, from simplicity to richness. In the early stage, aesthetic education textbooks mainly focused on traditional art appreciation, with relatively monotonous content. After entering the 21st century, with the deepening of educational reform, aesthetic education textbooks began to incorporate more modern elements, such as digital media art, design thinking, and other emerging fields, gradually forming a diversified content system.

2.2 Types and Characteristics of Current Aesthetic Education Textbooks

Currently, the aesthetic education textbooks used by Jiangsu applied undergraduate universities mainly include art history, art appreciation, creative design, and other types. These textbooks usually have the following characteristics: first, they emphasize the combination of theory and practice; second, they stress the integration of interdisciplinary knowledge; and third, they tend to cultivate students' innovative consciousness and aesthetic ability. However, these textbooks still fall short in meeting the needs of students with different academic backgrounds.

2.3 Reform Trajectory of Aesthetic Education Textbooks

Facing the problems of aesthetic education textbooks, Jiangsu Province has actively responded to the call of the national education department. Jiangsu applied undergraduate universities have embarked on the path of exploration and reform, issuing a series of policies and measures to support the reform of aesthetic education textbooks. For example, Jiangsu has fully implemented the "Aesthetic Education Infiltration Action"[3], encouraging universities to cooperate with enterprises to jointly develop aesthetic education courses and textbooks that meet industry needs. In practice, some universities have attempted to integrate local cultural and artistic resources into textbooks, such as the "Suzhou Garden Art" series of textbooks developed by Suzhou Vocational and Technical College of Arts and Crafts, effectively enhancing students' sense of regional cultural identity and practical operation ability. Additionally, some universities have attempted to construct an interdisciplinary aesthetic education curriculum system, combining aesthetic education with professional teaching to form a synergistic effect.

3 Deficiencies and Problems of Aesthetic Education Textbooks in Jiangsu Applied Undergraduate Universities

3.1 Disconnection Between Teaching Material Content and the Development of the Times

The current aesthetic education textbooks in Jiangsu applied undergraduate universities exhibit a lag in content updates[4]. With the rapid development of technology and changes in aesthetic concepts, the existing aesthetic education textbooks fail to fully reflect contemporary art trends and

technological innovations. For example, the insufficient coverage of digital art, new media art, and other fields makes it difficult for students to obtain the latest artistic information and creative means through the textbooks.

3.2 The Gap Between Textbooks and the Actual Needs of Students

The student population in Jiangsu's applied undergraduate colleges has diverse backgrounds and needs, but existing aesthetic education textbooks often ignore this point. The content of the textbooks is too theoretical and lacks relevance and practicality[5], making it difficult to meet the specific needs of students in different majors. In addition, the design of practical activities in the textbooks is insufficient, failing to effectively promote students' ability to translate theoretical knowledge into practical skills.

3.3 Unbalanced Distribution of Textbooks

In some universities in Jiangsu Province, the distribution of aesthetic education teaching resources shows a significant imbalance. Some universities have abundant aesthetic education teaching resources due to sufficient funds and strong faculty, while others face resource scarcity due to various restrictions. This uneven distribution of resources affects the quality of aesthetic education textbooks and the improvement of teaching effectiveness, exacerbating educational inequality between schools.

4 Analysis of the Crux of Aesthetic Education Textbooks in Jiangsu Applied Undergraduate Colleges

4.1 Limitations of Teaching Material Compilation Mechanism

The main limitations faced by Jiangsu applied undergraduate colleges in the compilation of aesthetic education textbooks include the lack of participation of industry experts, long update cycles, and imperfect feedback mechanisms. Due to the absence of direct input from the field of artistic practice, the content of textbooks often fails to reflect the latest artistic trends and technological developments in a timely manner. Furthermore, the revision and updating of textbooks are not flexible enough to adapt to rapidly changing educational needs and social developments. The majority of those compiling aesthetic education textbooks come from artistic backgrounds, lacking interdisciplinary knowledge and practical experience, which further exacerbates this issue.

4.2 Challenges in Evaluating the Effectiveness of Textbooks

Evaluating the effectiveness of aesthetic education textbooks poses another crucial challenge. Currently, Jiangsu applied undergraduate colleges generally lack a scientific and systematic evaluation system to quantify and analyze the actual teaching effects of these materials. This situation leads to a lack of data support for material improvement, making it difficult to address existing issues in a targeted manner and thereby affecting the enhancement of teaching quality.

4.3 Cognitive Differences between Teachers and Students on Textbooks

Significant differences exist between teachers' and students' perceptions of aesthetic education textbooks. Teachers may place greater emphasis on the theoretical depth and professionalism of the

materials, while students tend to favor their interest and practicality. This disparity results in a gap in practical application, where students may lack interest and be unwilling to delve deeper, while teachers may feel frustrated if the materials do not align with their teaching objectives. Therefore, narrowing this cognitive gap to ensure that textbooks meet both instructional requirements and students' interests is a pressing issue.

4.4 Insufficient Investment in Textbook Development

Due to limited funds and resources, Jiangsu applied undergraduate colleges have relatively low investments in the development of aesthetic education textbooks. This results in long development cycles, slow update speeds, and difficulty in ensuring quality. Additionally, it restricts the application and promotion of new technologies and approaches in the compilation of textbooks.

5 Practical Pathways for Aesthetic Education Textbooks in Jiangsu Applied Undergraduate Colleges

5.1 Enhancing the Timeliness and Forward-looking Nature of Teaching Material Content

To meet the needs of the times, the aesthetic education textbooks of Jiangsu applied undergraduate colleges should enhance their timeliness and forward-looking nature. This requires compilers to keep pace with artistic trends and technological innovations, regularly update material content, optimize the content and structure of aesthetic education textbooks, and promptly introduce new content and achievements reflecting the characteristics of the times. Simultaneously, emphasis should be placed on innovation and diversification in material forms, utilizing multimedia, the internet, and other modern technological means to improve the fun and interactivity of textbooks. Furthermore, cross-disciplinary knowledge integration and infiltration should be strengthened to provide students with space for exploration and practical monitoring, stimulating their innovative thinking and practical abilities.

5.2 Improving the Integration of Textbooks with Local Culture

Incorporating local cultural resources is an effective way to enhance the appeal and educational effectiveness of aesthetic education textbooks. Jiangsu applied undergraduate colleges should deeply explore local cultural characteristics and integrate elements such as local art, history, and folklore into their materials. For instance, they can develop specialized content on intangible cultural heritage topics like Suzhou gardens and Yangzhou paper-cutting[6], enabling students to enhance their cultural identity and heritage while learning about aesthetic education, thereby strengthening cultural confidence.

5.3 Strengthening the Practical Orientation and Interactivity of Textbooks

Practice is the sole criterion for testing truth and the key to improving aesthetic education's teaching effects. Therefore, aesthetic education textbooks should emphasize practical orientation, providing more operational activities and projects for students to learn and experience through practice. At the same time, the interactivity of textbooks should be increased, such as by setting up discussion questions, workshops, and online interactive platforms, to enhance student participation and learning interest, fostering deeper understanding and application of knowledge.

5.4 Establishing a Continuous Update and Feedback Mechanism

To ensure the continuous improvement and adaptability of aesthetic education textbooks, establishing an effective update and feedback mechanism is crucial. Jiangsu applied undergraduate colleges should regularly collect feedback from teachers and students, analyze data to identify the strengths and weaknesses of textbooks, and promptly adjust and optimize their content. Furthermore, a dedicated textbook review team can be established to oversee the quality and update progress of textbooks, ensuring their continued vitality and relevance.

5.5 Enhancing Teachers' Professional Competence

Teachers are vital implementers of aesthetic education, and their professional competence directly impacts the effective utilization of textbooks and the quality of aesthetic education. Therefore, Jiangsu applied undergraduate colleges should intensify training for aesthetic education teachers, enhancing their professional competence and teaching abilities through measures such as regularly organizing professional training, encouraging teacher participation in textbook compilation, establishing teacher exchange platforms, Establish a diversified evaluation system, etc.

6 Research Conclusions and Future Prospects

6.1 Research Conclusions

Through an in-depth analysis of the reform and exploration of aesthetic education textbooks in Jiangsu's application-oriented undergraduate institutions, this article draws the following conclusions:

6.1.1 Remarkable Policy Promotion: Relevant policies from the state and the Ministry of Education have provided strong support for the reform of aesthetic education textbooks, promoting the standardized and scientific development of aesthetic education.

6.1.2 Coexistence of Current Status and Challenges: While Jiangsu's application-oriented undergraduate institutions have achieved certain results in aesthetic education textbooks, issues such as the disconnection between teaching content and the times, lack of practicality and local characteristics, and imperfect evaluation systems still exist.

6.1.3 Clear Reform Path: By strengthening top-level design, optimizing textbook content and structure, enhancing teachers' professional qualities, and establishing a diversified evaluation system, the reform and development of aesthetic education textbooks can be effectively promoted.

6.2 Future Prospects

Looking ahead, research on aesthetic education textbooks in Jiangsu's application-oriented undergraduate institutions should be further deepened, particularly in leveraging digital technology to enhance textbook interactivity and practicality. Meanwhile, research should focus on the actual impact of textbook reform on students' innovation capabilities, aesthetic literacy, and social responsibility cultivation. Additionally, given the cultural exchanges and collisions in the context of globalization, future research should also explore how to integrate an international perspective into aesthetic education textbooks to cultivate students' global competitiveness.

In summary, the reform and exploration of aesthetic education textbooks in Jiangsu's application-oriented undergraduate institutions is a long-term and arduous task. Only through continuous innovation, courageous practice, and continuous improvement can we promote the comprehensive development of aesthetic education and contribute to cultivating university-level applied talents

with noble aesthetic tastes and innovative capabilities for the new era.

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